



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
Washington, DC 20240



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To: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service
Director, National Park Service

From: Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget

Subject: Federal Fire & Aviation Operations 2005 Action Plan

Enclosed is the interagency Federal Fire & Aviation Operations 2005 Action Plan. This plan establishes and communicates USDA-Forest Service and Department of the Interior direction for wildland fire operations during the 2005 fire season. It introduces this year's operational expectations, and clarifies existing policies and procedures.

The plan focuses on six areas: fire operations and aviation safety, preparedness and suppression operations, cost containment, federal wildland fire management policy implementation, interagency fire program management implementation and hazardous fuels treatments. These focus areas and the supporting guidance is based on our collective fire suppression priorities: protection of life as the first priority, and protection of property, natural and cultural resources as the second priority. Sound cost management practices will be followed, consistent with firefighter and public safety.

- The plan reinforces Chief and Secretarial direction to implement established safe operating practices on every incident, including the requirement for Incident Commanders to define clear and concise objectives on every wildland fire, and to use the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Risk Management Process in every fire operation.
- Regarding preparedness and suppression, all units will be trained, staffed and prepared to meet fire season needs.
- Cost containment direction addresses the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSa) and related certification thresholds, and requirements for utilizing Incident Management Teams, Incident Business Advisors, and Cost Oversight Teams.
- The plan adds two new focus areas this year: providing direction for the implementation of our updated Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standard (IFPM).

Agency administrators must be personally involved in establishing priorities for fire management and setting direction for developing, reviewing and approving the WFSA. Agency administrator oversight and involvement during the decision-making process is critical for safe and cost-effective suppression operations.

Again, I reinforce our emphasis on firefighter safety, a responsibility we all share as we manage the 2005 wildland fire season.

cc: Assistant Secretary – Land and Minerals Management
Assistant Secretary – Fish and Wildlife and Parks
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs